

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MADRID 02168 041745Z

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ACTION VOE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8572

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CVIS, SP

SUBJECT: EXPANDED PAROLE PROGRAM FOR CUBAN REFUGEES

FOR SCA/VO, ORM AND EUR/IB

1. PROVIDED HERewith IS A RESUME OF THE EMBASSY'S FIRST FOUR MONTHS OF ACTIVITY UNDER THE EXPANDED PAROLE PROGRAM (EPP), TOGETHER WITH OUR PROJECTIONS OF FUTURE OPERATIONS TO THE END OF THE PROGRAM. THE LATTER ARE STILL NECESSARILY TENTATIVE, AS NO CLEAR PICTURE HAS YET EMERGED AS TO THE ACTUAL NUMBER OF CUBANS STILL IN SPAIN AND INTERESTED IN APPLYING FOR ENTRY INTO THE UNITED STATES.

2. THE FIRST DOCUMENTS UNDER THE EXPANDED PAROLE PROGRAM WERE ISSUED ON DECEMBER 3, 1973. DURING THE PERIOD DECEMBER 1973 THROUGH MARCH 1974, 6490 REFUGEES FROM CUBA WERE DOCUMENTED FOR ENTRY INTO THE UNITED STATES. OF THESE, 615 RECEIVED IMMIGRANT VISAS, 940 RECEIVED PAROLE DOCUMENTS UNDER PREVIOUSLY ESTABLISHED CRITERIA, AND 4935 WERE PROCESSED UNDER THE EPP. (OUR 5000TH EPP APPLICANT WAS DOCUMENTED ON APRIL 1, 1974).

3. DURING THE EARLY MONTHS OF THE PROGRAM THE PERCENTAGE OF REFUGEES WHO FAILED TO KEEP OR WHO CANCELLED SCHEDULED APPOINTMENTS FREQUENTLY RAN AS HIGH AS 20-25 PERCENT. THE REASONS FOR THIS ARE NOT CLEAR, BUT SINCE MOST OF THEM ASKED TO HAVE APPOINTMENTS RESCHEDULED LATER, IT IS UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 MADRID 02168 041745Z

PRESUMED THAT THEY FOUND IT DIFFICULT OR INCONVENIENT TO

PREPARE TO TRAVEL ON SHORT NOTICE. THE EMBASSY THROUGH THE VOLAGS STRESSED THAT 1) VISAS AND PRE-PAROLE DOCUMENTS WERE VALID FOR ENTRY WITHIN FOUR MONTHS OF ISSUANCE, AND 2) LOWER PRIORITY WOULD HAVE TO BE GIVEN TO NEW APPOINTMENTS FOR THOSE APPLICANTS WHO HAD FAILED TO KEEP ORIGINAL APPOINTMENTS WITHOUT VALID REASONS. THIS PROBLEM NOW APPEARS TO BE RESOLVING ITSELF, AND IN MARCH OUR TOTAL DAILY ISSUANCE CONSISTENTLY REACHED 100.

4. DURING THE CURRENT MONTH QUALIFIED EPP APPLICANTS WHO LEFT CUBA BEFORE MARCH 1, 1972, ARE BEING SCHEDULED FOR INTERVIEWS. WE EXPECT THIS EPP "PRIORITY DATE" TO ADVANCE COMPARATIVELY SLOWLY IN NEXT FEW MONTHS, AS THE FLOW OF REFUGEES INTO SPAIN FROM CUBA WAS STILL AT ITS HEAVIEST DURING FIRST NINE MONTHS OF 1972. FURTHER, AS OUR EPP "PRIORITY DATE" IS NOW MORE FAVORABLE THAN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE PRIORITY DATE, IT IS EXPECTED THAT FROM NOW ON EVEN THOSE REFUGEES WITH PRIORITY DATES WILL BE PROCESSED UNDER EPP TO AVOID SUBSTANTIAL WAITING PERIODS.

5. THE EMBASSY AND INTERESTED AGENCIES ARE STILL UNABLE TO PROVIDE A FIRM ESTIMATE OF THE ACTUAL NUMBER OF CUBANS IN SPAIN ELIGIBLE TO APPLY FOR ENTRY UNDER EPP. WE CAN PROVIDE A FAIRLY ACCURATE TOP FIGURE OF 12,000 REMAINING AS OF APRIL 1, BUT FROM THAT FIGURE MUST BE DEDUCTED TWO UNKNOWN QUANTITIES: THOSE WHO WILL CHOOSE NOT TO APPLY, AND THOSE WHO HAVE ALREADY DEPARTED SPAIN AND ENTERED THE U.S. BY MEANS OTHER THAN IMMIGRANT VISA OR PAROLE DOCUMENTATION, WITHOUT, OF COURSE, NOTIFYING VOLAGS OR THE EMBASSY OF THEIR DEPARTURE. HOWEVER, ASSUMING WE ARE ABLE TO MAINTAIN OUR PRESENT LEVEL OF ISSUANCE, WE FORESEE NO DIFFICULTY IN PROCESSING ANY AND ALL APPLICANTS BEFORE THE PROGRAM ENDS ON OCT 25, 1974.
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